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KENTUCKY MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON ON FEDERAL INTERSTATE STALKING CHARGE

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – Mark A. Smith, 38, of Newport, Kentucky, was sentenced today to 37 months in prison by United States District Judge Robert C. Chambers for interstate stalking. Smith pleaded guilty in February to the charge. Smith admitted that on August 13, 2006, he traveled in interstate commerce from Ohio to Huntington, West Virginia with the intent to injure, harass, or intimidate his former wife. As a result of such travel, Smith placed his ex-wife in reasonable fear of death or serious bodily injury.

An investigation revealed that prior to traveling to Huntington, Smith admitted to placing a telephone call to his ex-wife in an attempt to locate her and the couple's child, both of whom were at her mother's Huntington residence at the time. A short time later, Smith arrived at the Huntington residence and pounded on the front door of the home in an attempt to gain entry. After refusing to leave the residence, Smith continued to pound on the front door, began breaking windows and eventually got back into his vehicle and admitted to ramming his ex-wife's mother's vehicle that was located near the home's garage. When responding police officers arrived at the scene, Smith fled on foot. The defendant was eventually apprehended by the West Virginia State Police and taken into custody.

The Court also ordered Smith to pay \$6,642.49 in restitution to the victims.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Wayne County Sheriff's Department, the West Virginia State Police and the Cabell County Sheriff's Department. Assistant United States Attorney Lisa Johnston handled the prosecution.

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MASON COUNTY MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON ON FEDERAL DRUG CHARGES

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – Dennis Lester Barker, 56, of Gallipolis Ferry, Mason County, West Virginia was sentenced today to six months in prison by United States District Judge Robert C. Chambers for cultivation of marijuana. Barker pleaded guilty in February to the charge. On September 9, 2009, members of the West Virginia State Police were conducting aerial marijuana eradication operations in southern Mason County. Upon flying over Barker's Gallipolis Ferry residence, officers observed several marijuana plants growing in a garden plot behind the residence. Law enforcement ground units followed up on the aerial search and seized approximately 165 mature plants from the defendant's property. Barker waived his Miranda rights and admitted to growing the plants for both his personal use and compensation.

The investigation was conducted by the West Virginia State Police. Assistant United States Attorney Joshua Hanks handled the prosecution.

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